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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/813,572	03/31/2004	Hong Zhou	0026-0080	4333
44989	7590	10/19/2006	EXAMINER	
HARRITY SNYDER, LLP				BELL, CORY C
11350 Random Hills Road				ART UNIT
SUITE 600				PAPER NUMBER
FAIRFAX, VA 22030				2164

DATE MAILED: 10/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/813,572	ZHOU ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Cory C. Bell	2164	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.



SAM RIMELL
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-22 have been examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-16, and 18-22 are rejected under 35 USC 112 second paragraph for the following reasons:
 3. The relationship between first recitation of “a common word or phrase” (Claim 1 line 4. Claim 14 lines 4-5, Claim 18 lines 3-4, Claim 21 lines 4-5, and Claim 22 line 4) and the secondary recitations (Claim 1 line 6. Claim 14 line 7, Claim 18 line 5, Claim 21 line 7, and Claim 22 lines 5 and 10) as well as any further recitations (Claims 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 19, and 20) is unclear.
 4. The relationship between first recitation of “a search based on the received search query” (Claim 1 line 7 and Claim 14 line 8) and the secondary recitations (Claim 3 line 3 and Claim 6 line 4 and claim 16 line 3) is unclear.
 5. The relationship between first recitation of “a search based on the rewritten search query” (Claim 1 line 7) and the secondary recitation (Claim 5 line 3) is unclear.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1-5, 7, 9, 12, 14-19, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6006225, known hereafter as Bowman.

7. *As per Claim 1*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

1. A method, comprising: receiving a search query;{Col 3 lines 5-9} determining whether the received search query includes an entity name;{Col 6 lines 59-64} determining whether the entity name is associated with a common word or phrase; {Col 6 line 64- Col 7 line 5} selectively rewriting the received search query based on whether the entity name is determined to be associated with a common word or phrase;{Figure 7 shows if there are no terms in the correlation table then no rewrite is performed, Figure 9 also shows the rewrite be selectable as well} performing a search based on the received search query or the rewritten search query to obtain search results; and presenting the search results{Figure 9};

8. *As per Claim 2*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising: providing a link to the received search query when the search is performed based on the rewritten search query. {Figure 9 shows the rewritten query being accessed through a link from to original query, it is inherent that those results would have a link back to the received search query via the back button};

9. *As per Claim 3*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising: receiving selection of the link to the received search query; and performing a search based on the received search query. {Figure 9};

10. *As per Claim 4*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising: providing a link to the rewritten search query when the search is performed based on the received search query. {Figure 9}

11. *As per Claim 5*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising: receiving selection of the link to the rewritten search query; and performing a search based on the rewritten search query. {Figure 9, Col 14 lines 13-23}

12. *As per Claim 7*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

7. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether the entity name is associated with a common word or phrase comprises: comparing the entity name to a dictionary of words or phrases. {Figure 7, Figure 5A}

13. *As per Claim 9*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

9. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether the entity name is associated with a common word or phrase comprises: generating a table of entity names that are associated with common words or phrases, and determining whether the entity name is associated with a common word or phrase based on the table. {Figure 5a, Col 2 lines 47-63}

14. *As per Claim 12*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

12. The method of claim 1, wherein performing a search comprises: searching based on the received search query when the entity name is determined to be associated with a common word or phrase. {See Figure 9}

15. *As per Claim 14*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

See Claim 1 rejection.

16. *As per Claim 15*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

See Claim 2 rejection.

17. *As per Claim 16*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

See Claim 3 rejection.

18. *As per Claim 17*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

See Claim 1 rejection.

19. *As per Claim 18*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

18. A method, comprising: determining a plurality of entity names; determining whether each of the entity names is associated with a common word or phrase; {See Claim 1 rejection} and generating a table of the entity names that are associated with common words or phrases. {Col 2 lines 47-63}

20. *As per Claim 19*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

19. The method of claim 18, wherein determining whether each of the entity names is associated with a common word or phrase comprises: comparing each of the entity names to a dictionary of words or phrases. {See Claim 7 rejection}

21. *As per Claim 21*, Bowman teaches the limitations as follows:

See Claim 18 rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

22. Claims 6, 8, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman in view of “The Use of external Knowledge in Facton QA”, known hereafter as Hovy.

23. *As per claims 6 and 20,*

Bowman teaches the claims upon which claims 6 and 20 are dependant, and performing a received search and providing links to alternate searches, but Bowman fails to expressly disclose “determining whether a word near the entity name in the received search query forms a common phrase with the entity name” and using the phrase to rewrite a query. This feature, however, is taught in Hovy Section 3 under expanding queries. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include this feature as it would provide a further option to improve the users query.

24. *As per claim 8,*

Bowman teaches the claims upon which claim 8 is dependant, but Bowman fails to expressly disclose “using a linguistic modeling technique” to determine associations. This feature, however, is taught in Hovy Section “Semantic Relation Matching in Webclopedia”. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include this feature as it would provide a further option to improve the users query.

25. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman in view of US 20040225681, known hereafter as Chaney.

26. *As per claim 11,*

Bowman teaches the claims upon which claim 11 is dependant, but Bowman fails to expressly disclose determining variation of the entity names. This feature, however, is taught in Chaney para 134. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include this feature as it would provide to improve the users query.

27. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman in view of US 5640553, known hereafter as Schultz.

As per claim 13,

Bowman teaches the claims upon which claim 13 is dependant, but Bowman fails to expressly disclose rewriting a query when the entity name cannot be expanded. This feature, however, is taught in Sultz Figure 6b which teaches doing semantic expansion of terms that are not proper nouns. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include this feature, as it would provide to improve the users query.

Claims 10 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman in view of “Name Searching and Information Retrieval,” known hereafter a Thompson.

Bowman teaches the claims upon which claim 10 is dependant, and all limitations of claim 22(see claims 1 and 2 rejections), except Bowman fails to expressly disclose, “selectively rewriting the received search query comprises: modifying the received search query to include a restrict identifier associated with the entity name when the entity name is determined not to be associated with a common word or phrase.” However, this is taught in Thompson page 136 second column with the inclusion of a proximity operator. Thus, it would have been obvious

to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include this limitation as it provides the advantage of the results containing more accurate documents.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cory C. Bell whose telephone number is (571) 272 2736. The examiner can normally be reached on m-f 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on (571) 272 4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

CB


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